

THE
Christian Monitor,

The Second Part.

Containing an Earnest

EXHORTATION

TO A

Holy Dying,

WITH

Proper DIRECTIONS in
order to a *Timely Repentance.*

ALSO,

Suitable Prayers and Ejaculations for
Sick Persons : And Serious Consi-
derations on the Four Last Things,
*viz. Death, Judgment, Heaven and
Hell.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for S. Manchip, at the Ship near
the Royal Exchange in Cornhil, 1706.

CHRISTIAN ALMIGHTY

EXHORTATION

TO A

Holy Day

Trinitarian Direction

Suitable Prayers and Exhortations

Sick Persons: And for the

Directions on the Day

LONDON

Printed for J. Baskin, at the

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The Introduction, shewing the Shortness and Uncertainty of the Life of Man.

C H A P. I.

Serious and deep Considerations and Reflections on the short Duration and Uncertainty of the Life of Man, as an urgent Motive to cause us to remember our Latter End, and timely prepare for a Holy Dying.

THE Life of Man, by reason of its uncertainty, has by the Wise Men of all Ages been compared to Things of the shortest Duration; as a Bubble, a Leaf, a Flower that faderth, a Shadow that fleeth away, Smoke, a Vapour, a Span, and the like. Lucian tells us all the World is a Storm, and Men rise up in their several Generations like Bubbles, descending from God and the Dew of Heaven, from Nature and Providence, and instantly some of these sink into the Deluge of their first Parent, and are flatted in a sheet of Water, seeming to have no other Business in the World, but to be Born, that they might be capable of Dying; others float up and down for a while, and disappear in a sudden, giving place to such as rise to succeed them; and those that continue longest are in perpetual Motion, restless and uneasy, till being crushed with the greater Drop of a Cloud, they sink into Darkness and a Froth; the Change in this case not being great, for it can hardly be possible it should be more a Nothing than it was before.

So is the Life of every Man ; he is born in Sin and Vanity ; he comes into the World to act his part as it were on a Stage, for a little while, and then disappears, and is no more seen. The uncertainty of Man's Life, no doubt, made St. James tell us, that *our Life is but a Vapour* which suddenly rises up, being a phantastical thing, an apparition exhaled by the Sun, not so much as a Mist, or the matter of a Shower, nor of Substance sufficient to make a Cloud ; it remains for a little while, and then vanishes from our Sight, like a Shadow that departeth ; or is like a Tale that is told, or a Dream when one awaketh. *Hosier* calls a Man a Leaf, the smallest and weakest part of a short-liv'd Plant. *Pinder* calls him the Dream of a Shadow : And another, The Shadow of Smoke. And these are to shew us how vain and unfixed, how short-liv'd and frail a Creature Man is, so that he cannot long last even in the Scene of Fancy.

Every Revolution the Sun makes about the World divides between Life and Death, and Death by the next Morning possesses both those Portions, and we are Dead to all those Months we have already liv'd, so that we shall never live them over again, and yet God still makes little Periods of our Age. First we change our World when we come from the Womb to feel the warmth of the Sun ; and so if Death meets us not over-hastily, we grow up escaping a thousand Accidents that befall many in their Infancy, or Childhood, and send them to an untimely Grave : Then in Youthful Sprightfulness the Young Man dances like a Bubble empty and gay, and shines like a Dove's Neck, or the Image of a Rainbow, whose Imagery and Colours are phantastical, and so passes over the Gaiety of his Youth, not considering he is all this while in a Storm, and that he should be more serious, and think of the Days of Darkness that are coming on, which will be many, and prudently consider what a world of Accidents may happen to snatch him from the Stage of this Life, whilst he expects to act a long part in it ; and then

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he cannot but seriously contemplate with Wonder and Amazement, the great Mercies of God, that has hitherto preserved him from the innumerable Misfortunes others younger than himself have fallen into beneath the weight of, by which they have been pressed down to the Grave, and their Eyes have no more beheld the Light of the Sun, which *Solomon* tells us is so pleasant to a Man : For indeed, the Preservation of a Man alive in the midst of so many Chances and Hostilities, is as great a Miracle as to Create him. To preserve him from rushing into Nothing, as at first to draw him out of Nothing, were equally the Issues of an Almighty Power.

Let us further consider seriously, that as Time winds off our Days, Months or Years, Death encroaches the faster upon us ; for Baldness is but a Dressing to our Funerals, and a proper Ornament of Mourning, and of a Person entered very far into the Regions of Death ; and having passed the Strength of our Years (though Millions arrive not at Grey Hairs, but long before taste the Grave) then our Lives in many cases become comfortable and burthensome to us, our Teeth fall out, our Eyes grow dim, our Joints tremble, our Limbs become stiff, our Skin wrinkles and shrivels, our Memory and Appetite decays, and every Days Necessity calls for a Reparation of that Portion which Death hath fed on all Night, when we lay slumbering in his Lap, and slept in his outward Chambers. The very Spirits of a Man prey upon the proportion of Bread and Flesh, and every Meal is a rescue from one Death, and lays up for another, and whilst we think a Thought we dye, and the Clock strikes and reckons on our portion of Eternity ; we form our Words with the Breath of our nostrils, and we have the less to live upon for every Word we speak.

Thus Nature calls us to meditate on Death by those things that are the Instruments of acting it, and God in all the Variety of his Providence makes us see Death every where in all Variety of Circumstances ; though Nature hath given us but one Harvest

every Year, we sadly find Death has two, the *Spring* and *Autumn*, which send throngs of all Ages to the Grave.

CHAP. II.

Of the Uncertainty of our Life, with pressing Motives to a speedy Consideration of our Mortality.

THESE Things of weight, tending to the Uncertainty of our Life, being seriously considered, and that Death is certainly sooner or later to be expected, it will be high Time for every one to look to his own Concern, and prepare for a happy Eternity, which is the main End of his Creation and Redemption; therefore let no Man extend his Thoughts, or suffer his Hopes to wander towards future or far distant Events, and accidental Contingencies, but let him wisely consider with himself and say, This Day is mine, but I know not what shall be on the Morrow, therefore let me Repent of my Sins whilst it is to Day, whilst the golden Opportunity is in my hand; for without a Divine Revelation I cannot know what may befall me ere the next Morning creeps out of a dark Cloud; for many who are this Day alive shall to Morrow be laid upon the cold Earth, and their Friends shall weep over their Shrouds, and dress them for their Funerals. Many Brides have dyed under the hands of their Paranympths, or Maids, whilst they have been dressing them for uneasy Joys, according to the saying of *Bensrah* the Wise Jew, *The Bride went into her Chamber, and knew not what should befall her there.* Some have been paying their Vows, and giving Thanks for a prosperous return to their own Houses, and the Roofs have descended on their Heads, and turned their loud Religion into the deep silence of the Grave; and therefore we ought always to be preparing to meet Death, seeing there is so little certainty of Life. *St. James* in his Epistle

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notes the Folly of some Men in his time, who were so impatient of the Event of to Morrow, or the Accidents of the next Year, or the Good or Evils of Old Age, that they would consult Astrologers and Soothsayers to know what should befall them, which too many over-fondly and foolishly, in our Days, imitate; as if they knew what God in his secret Council had determined, when we know they are shut up as the Secrets of his Eternal Purposes, from the Knowledge and Ways of Men and Angels; and against this God opposes his Counsel, that we should not search after forbidden Records, much less uncertain Significations: For whatever is disposed to happen by the Order of Natural Causes, or Civil Councils, may be rescinded by a peculiar Decree of Providence, and be prevented by the Death of the interested Persons, who whilst their Hopes are full, and their Causes conjoined, and the Work brought forward, and the Sickles put to the Harvest, and the First-Fruits offered and ready to be eaten, even then if they put forth their Hand to an Event that stands but at the door, their Bodies may be carried forth to Burial before their Expectation shall enter into Parturition; as it happened to the Rich Fool in the Gospel, who flattering himself with the Enjoyment of the abundance of Wealth he had stored up, in a Promise of many Years, was that Night stript of them all, and his Soul hurried away into Regions where they could not follow him, or give him the least drop of Comfort or Consolation. He was mistaken in his Time, and upon that surprize all his mighty Wealth availed him nothing.

Therefore as our Hopes must be confined, so must our Designs; for the Business of our Souls is cut short, facill, sweet and plain, and fitted to the small portions of the short duration of our Lives, which is so short, that to sum up all, it is enough to say, *Thou art a Man*, in whom there is not in the World any greater instance of Heights and Declensions, of Lights and Shadows, of Miserie and Folly, of Laughter and Tears, of Groans and Death.

And because this Consideration is very weighty, let it enforce us to look around us a little more, and we shall see every Creature does preach our Funeral Sermon, and calls us to look and see how the old Sexton, Time, throws up the Earth, and digs a Grave, wherein we must lay our Sins and our Sorrows, and sow our Bodies till they rise again in a fair or an intolerable Eternity, which is endless; for when a thousand thousand Millions of Ages are past, Eternity is the same as when we first entered upon it, an Everlasting Circle without Limit or End: Then happy is he who falls upon it in a Blessed State, and O how miserable, wretched and deplorable, must he be, who when he leaves this Life must enter into an Estate of Woes and Horrors for ever and ever! For *who* (as the Prophet *Isaiah* says) *can dwell with the Everlasting Burnings?* And yet those that improve not their Talent in this Life, which is only so long put into their hands, must fall under this heavy Doom. O that all would consider this, even whilst it is to Day, and not delay or put off their Repentance upon an Uncertainty, with which too many flatter themselves they shall have Time enough to repent in: As if God would be put off, or pleased, with the Dreggs of Old Age, or Death-bed Repentance, when through our Infirmities, or Sickness, we can sin no longer. And to wean us from this World, and put us upon a speedy Repentance, the following Practical Considerations are very proper.

C H A P: III.

How we ought to wean our Thoughts and Affections from the Vanities of this World.

HE that rightly considers what a vast difference there is between the Vanities and gilded Pleasures of this World, and the Glories that shall be revealed in the World to come, knowing how certain Death is, and that all sooner or later must descend to the

the Grave, cannot but be taught always to keep Death in his View; and it will be a perpetual Antidote against the Follies and Vanities of this World; and a spur to Vertue.

If you find your Desires to the World enlarged beyond not only the Wants, but the Conveniencies of Nature, say to your self, What can be the meaning of all this? What kindles these insatiable Desires of Riches or Honour? Why do I store up so much Treasure, and brood such Ambition in my Soul? This World is not my Home, my proper Habitation. The Center my Soul should Aim at, is in the Holy and Heavenly Jerusalem; thither I am travelling, and must shortly remove my Dwelling from hence, and then what will all these Things, I so much set my Affections on, avail me? Death will shortly close my Eyes, and then I shall not see the Gold I now so much admire; the Earth shall shortly cover me, and then I shall enjoy no more of all my extensive Lands than a six foot Grave, there to moulder into Clay and Dust.

Such Thoughts as these cannot but be proper to mind us of our Latter End, and that will wear us from the World, and bring us to a state of true Repentance, and move us to Works of Mercy and Charity, considering that we want no more in this World than what is sufficient to carry us through it; and therefore what wiser or better use can we make of such Riches as we must leave of necessity behind us, than to return them before-hand in Acts of Charity and Piety, that we may receive them again with great Advantage in a Heavenly Kingdom, where there is Fulness of Joy, and Pleasures that shall never fade away. *Make to your selves* (says our Blessed Saviour) *Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into Everlasting Habitations.*

These Thoughts should curb the swelling Ambition of Mens Minds, or restrain their covetous Desires, bridle their unruly Passions, and let them know they are but frail Creatures under the Dominion of Death,

Death, who extends his crimson Banner around the Globe, and takes the Forfeiture of Sin in all the quarters of the Earth, and when he makes his Arrest, laying his cold Mace on our Lives, ten thousand Worlds can give us no Bail or Reprieve, but he uncontrollably hurries us down into the dark Chambers of the Dust, and there lays us up close Prisoners to the dawning of the Resurrection, when the Arch-Angel Trumpet shall rouse our Bodies from their long Repose, and a Voice more loud than Thunder, calling to our senseless Clay, which then shall be reanimated, and receive new Life, *to arise and come to Judgment.* And therefore to prepare for Death, and not to tremble at his Terrors when he approaches us, is to keep our Lives always innocent, as if we were immediately to give up our Account to God, so far as Human Fraikties will permit us; to live as those who certainly must dye, and have the thoughts of Death about us continually, as a guard upon our Actions; for whatever is of so great a Consequence to us as Death is, should of necessity give Laws to our Conversation and Behaviour: And therefore the first thing we ought to do in this Life, being come to years of Understanding, must be to prepare for Death and a blessed Eternity, that whensoever Death opens the Gate to let us out of this World, we may be cheaifully ready to enter into the World that shall remain for ever. An Early Preparation for Death to prevent his Surprize, is the surest way to live a happy Life here, as well as eternally so hereafter. To live a Life of Holiness and Vertue as near as can be void of Offence, towards God and Man, is such a Life as will make this Earth a kind of a Heaven to a pious Soul, and give it a Taste of those Joys that shall be endless, delivering us from all those Mischiefs which the wildness and giddiness of Youth, and the more confirmed Debaucheries of Riper Years, expose Men to, being a great Engagement and Motive to prepare betimes for Death; since such a Preparation will put us to no greater Hardship or Illconveniency, than the practice of such Vertues

as will prolong our Lives, preserve and increase our Fortunes, and give us Honour and Reputation in the World, and make us be beloved both by God and Men.

This betimes delivers us from the Fears of Death; and then truly it is that a Man begins to live, when the Fear of Death has no power to disturb or disquiet his Mind, when he is free from the Terrors of it, that it cannot check or frown upon his innocent Mirth or Recreations: He is not as others, whom the Fears of Death often terrifie into Agonies of Mind, as if a Sword hung over their Heads by a single Hair: No; he considers himself to be mortal, and is not afraid to dye; his Pleasures and Enjoyments are sincere and unmixed, never disturbed with the Hand-writing on the Wall, nor with some secret qualms or misgivings of Mind; he is not affrighted with present Dangers, nor amazed or distracted with future ones; so that a Man who is delivered from the Fears of Death fears nothing else in excess but God, and that too in an awful Reverential Fear of Love not to offend him.

Again, as a consequent of this Early Preparation for Death, we may consider it will support us under all the Troubles and Calamities of this Life; and so many they are that no Man can escape them all: But the certainty of Dying well, and enjoying a happy Life to come, where all Sorrows and Tears shall be removed from us, will make a Man, prepared to Dye, courageously and lightly undergo those Troubles which to others will be unsupportable, and to bear his present Sufferings with Courage and Patience, when he is sensible he shall soon find an end of them; and that when Death friendly closes his Eyes, they will vanish from him like a Morning Mist before the Sun, and he for ever be placed far above their reach: For even in Death, as holy Job says, *The wicked cease from troubling; there the weary be at rest; there the Prisoners rest together, and they hear not the Voice of the Oppressor; the small and the great are there, and the Servant is free from his Master,* Job 3. 17. 18, 19.

18, 19. So by this we find, in many cases, that the Thoughts and Expectations of Death are very considerable Supports to bear us up in our Sufferings, because it is friendly when it closes the weeping Eyes, and hushes our Sorrows, takes off the Chains of the Prisoner, and frees the Captive from the Tyranny of the Oppressor : But whilst the Thoughts of Death it self are terrible to us, it will be but a poor comfort for those Men who, under the sense of Guilt, are more afraid of Death than of the Miseries that may befall them in this Life ; because whatsoever their present Sufferings are, they are not so terrible as *Lakes of Fire and Brimstone, the Worm that never dyeth, and the Fire that never is quenched* ; for such being under the Terrors of Death have nothing to support them under their present Miseries ; but to Good Men it is the contrary ; for the Thoughts of Death puts them into a possession of a very delightful Prospect, and when it comes it sends them to a Place where they see the Rewards of their Labours and Sufferings, of Faith and Patience : So that here they can the more joyfully suffer Shame and Reproach, and *take chearfully the spoiling of their Goods, since these light Afflictions which are but for a season, will work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory*. But Men who are not prepar'd to Dye, whilst the Fears of Death hang about them, can find no relief in the Thoughts of it, and therefore are destitute of the greatest Support this Life can afford in the Sufferings of it.

o The sooner therefore that we prepare to Dye, the sooner are we delivered from these Fears of Death, and then consequently the Hopes of a Better Life will conduct us chearfully through this World, what Storms soever we may meet withal.

C H A P. IV.

Motives to Repentance from the Consideration of our Mortality, and to make a good Use of our precious Time.

Those that would Dye well must even in the Prosperity of Life be looking for Death every day, as it were knocking at the Gates of the Grave, so the Sting of Death may be easie to them when it strikes the fatal Blow. And to put them in mind of their Mortality, many Devices were used by the Ancients. *Saladine*, though a great Emperour, had a Black Shirt carried before him, as a Banner, in the midst of his Triumphs, to mind him of his Dying Hour. The *Greek Emperours*, on the Day of their Coronation, had brought them by a Mason several Samples of Stone, to know of which they would have their Tomb framed. And even the Popes, to this time, on the Day of their Coronation, when they ride in the greatest Pomp and Splendour, have a piece of Flax fastened on two Reeds burnt before them, with these Words pronounced, *viz. So Holy Father passes away the Glory of this World*, to put them in mind that all Earthly Things are fading and transitory. And the *Egyptians* used to place the Skeleton of a Man, framed in Silver, at their Feasts, which moving by Clock-work on the Table, turned to every one, as much as to say, you, and you, and all must Dye; and this was to mind them of their Mortality, and allay their Excess in Eating and Drinking; for it is not easie for a Man to be gay in his Imagination, or be drunk with Joy, or Wine, or Pride, or Revenge, who considers sadly that he must ere long dwell in a House of Darknes and Dishonour, and his Eody be in the Inheritance of Worms, and his Soul must be what he pleases, even as a Man makes it here by his Living, Good or Bad; and therefore, *he that would Dye well, must all the Days of his Life lay up against the Day of his Death, not only*

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by a general provision of Holiness, and a Pious Life indefinitely, but Provisions proper to the necessity of that great Day of Expenditure, in which a Man is to throw his last Cast, for an Eternity of Joy or Sorrow ; ever remembering to secure the Spirit of God and the Grace of Faith, by an Habitual, Perfect, and unblamable Resolution ; and by Assiduous and Fervent Prayers all our Life long, to call upon God to give us Patience and great Assistance at the time of our Death ; to Resist and Subdue the Temptations and Assaults of Satan ; and so to fortify our Hearts, that it breaks not into intolerable Sorrow and Impatience, and end in Wretchedness and Infidelity : But this is to be the Work of our Life, and not to be done at once, but as God gives us time ; by Succession, by Parts, and little Periods. For it is very Remarkable, that God who giveth plentifully to all Creatures such other things as are necessary for them, seems however, to be strait-handed as to the distribution of our time, and gives it us, not as Nature gives us Rivers to Drown us, but Drop by Drop, Minute after Minute ; so that we can never have two Minutes together, but he takes away one when he gives another.

This should teach us to value our time, since God so values it ; and by so small a distribution of it, lets us know, it is the most precious thing we have : Since therefore in the Day of our Death, we can have but still the same little portion of this precious Time, let us every Minute of our Life (I mean, in every discernable portion) lay up such a stock of Reason and Good Works, that they may convey a value to the Imperfections and short Actions of our Death-Bed, whilst God rewards the Piety of our Lives, by his Gracious Acceptation upon the Actions Preparatory to our Death-Bed Repentance.

He that desires to Dye well, must above all things be careful that he does not Live a Delicate, Soft, and Voluptuous Life ; but a Life Severe, Holy, and Inoffensive, under the Conduct of Prudence and Observation : A Life of Warfare and Sober Councils,

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Labour and Watchfulness ; let him bear his Cross Patiently, his Sufferings Couragiously, and his Repentance Willingly and Constantly : Let him pity the Evils of all the World, and bear his share of the Calamities of his Brother : Let him long and sigh for the Joys of Heaven ; and let him tremble and fear, because he hath deserved the pains of Hell : Let him mix his External Fear, with Temporal Sufferings, preventing God's Judgments, by passing time of his own : Let him groan for the Labours of his Pilgrimage, and the Dangers of his Warfare, and by that time he hath Summoned up all these Labours, and Duties, and Contingencies, all the proper Causes, Instruments, and acts of Sorrow, he will find, that for a secular Joy and Wantonness of Spirit, there are not left many void spaces of his Life : It is St. James's Advice, viz. *Be afflicted and mourn and weep ; let your Laughter be turned into Mourning, and your Joy into Weeping.* James 4. 5. And certainly, Grace most properly descends into the Soul of a Man by Prayer and Affliction : A Mourning Spirit and an Afflicted Body, are great Instruments of Reconciling God to a Sinner ; and they always dwell at the Gates of Attonement and Restoration.

But besides this, a Delicate and Prosperous Life, is mainly contrary to the Hopes of a Blessed Eternity, *Woe be to them that are at ease in Sion ; as it was said of Old : And our Saviour says, Woe be to you that laugh, for you shall weep ; but Blessed are they that Mourn, for they shall be comforted.* Here or hereafter, we must have our portion of Sorrow. *He that goeth in his way weeping, and beareth good Seed with him, shall doubtless come again with Joy, and bring his sheaves with him.* And certainly, he that sadly considers the portion of Dives, and remembers the account that Abraham gave him (for the unavoidableness of his Torments, was because he had his good things in this Life) must in all reason run from Voluptuous Measures, and faring Deliciously every Day, as being a dangerous Estate, and a Confirmation to an Evil ;

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greater than all danger, the Pains and Torments of unhappy Souls; and therefore, rather by Abstinence, Temperance, and Soberness, and bearing Afflictions, we should press towards the mark of our high Calling; and so more safely and willingly pass through the Regions of Death, into a happy Eternity; whilst the Death-Bed of a Voluptuous Man, upbraids his little and couzening Prosperities; and exacts Pains, made more sharp, by passing from soft Beds and a soft Mind: Therefore he that would Dye Holily, and Happily, must in this World love Tears, Humility, Solitude, and Repentance.

CHAP. V.

Of Self-Examination; and a Dayly taking an account of our Actions, Words and Thoughts: Of Charity, Prayers, with Practical Rules, Inferences and Directions, to fit and prepare us for a Holy Dying, and a Blessed Eternity.

SELF-Examination is of great Moment, in order to prepare us for a Happy Eternity; for he that expects to Dye well, and pass into everlasting Felicity, must Dress his Soul by a diligent and frequent Scrutiny; he must perfectly Understand and Watch the state of it; he must set his House in order, before he is in a fit state of Dying; and for this, there is a very weighty Reason and Necessity.

As First, If we seriously consider the disorder of every Day, the Multitudes of Idle words, the large portion of precious time squandered away in Imperitency and Vanity; the Dayly Omissions of our Duty, the coldness of our Prayers, the indifferency of our Spirit in Holy things; the uncertainty of our secret purposes, our infinite deceptions, and Hypocrisies, sometimes unknown to us, and very often not observed by us; our deficiency in Charity; our being ignorant in how many degrees of purpose and action,

action, ever Virtue is to be exercised. The secret adherence of Pride, and a too forward Complacency in the best of our Actions; our daily abusing the Liberty that God gives us, and licentious Practices for Permissions; our unsuspected Sins in the managing a course of Life, certainly Lawful; beside, infinite variety of cases of Conscience, that do occur in the Life of Man, and in all intercourses of every day of our Life; and that the productions of Sin are numerous and Increasing: From these many Failings and Sins of Omission and Commission, we cannot but find, that the computation of a Man's Life, is a Restless, Uneasie, and intricate Business, full of Hurry and Disorder: And therefore to be the more safe here, and secure a future Happiness, there is all the reason in the World, that we should Daily sum up our Accounts, look back, and reflect upon our Actions ere we close our Eyes, and compose our selves to the little Images of Death which Sleep represents.

Secondly, If we put off our Account, or Reckoning, to a Death-Bed Repentance, or extrem Old Age, the Sum will be so vast and intricate, that in going about to cast it up, it will so confound us, that we shall be able to remember nothing but Clamorous and Crying Sins, and never consider Particulars, or forget very many; or if we could consider all that we ought of necessity, we must be confounded with the Multitude and Variety of our Sins; but if we observe all the little Passages of our Life, and reduce them into the order of Accounts, we shall find them Multiply so fast, that it will not only appear to be an ease to the accounts of our Death-Bed, but by the instrument of Shame, will restrain the Inundation of Evils; it being a thing Intolerable to Christian Modesty, to perceive Sins incroach and increase so fast, and Virtues grow up so slow; to see every Day stained with Leperous Sins, or marked with a lesser Evil; and so we shall be induced to abhor and forsake them, that we may go to God as to a Spiritual Guide, and search for Remedies and apply them: For certain it is, no Man can well observe his own Growth in

Grace, but by accounting the feldomer returns of Sin, and a more frequent Victory over Temptations; and in order to this Dayly Self-Examination. And to this end it was that St. Paul Wrote before the receiving the Holy Sacrament, viz. *Let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat, &c.* This Precept was given in those Days, when they Communicated every Day; and therefore, a Dayly Examination was thought expedient; and this will appear exceeding necessary if we consider Seriously, that at the Day of Judgment, every Idle Word, every loose and vain Thought, not only the largest lines of Life, but every Branch and Circumstance of every Action, shall be called to a severe Account; insomuch, that *Woe be to even the most innocent Life if God should scrutinize it, without a mixture of Mercy to temper the severity of his Justice*; in consideration of which, St. Paul Admonishes us to *judge our selves, and so we shall not be judged of the Lord.* The best way to avoid God's Anger, is to be angry with our Sins and our selves, for Sinning against him, to examine our Actions, and condemn the Criminal; so by being Assessors in God's Tribunal, at least ways we shall obtain the favour of the Court. As therefore every Night, our Bed is a Memorial of our Grave, so let our Thoughts at our lying down, bare an Image of the Day of Judgment; let us imagine we hear the Trumpet sound, and hear that terrible Voice of *Arise ye Dead and come to Judgment*; the which (as St. Bernard says) if it were always in our Thoughts, would deter us from a multitude of Evils, which by our supine Sloath, and drowsiness of Spirit, steal into our Hearts and crowd upon our Souls: And so necessary this was thought by *Pythagoras*, though but a Heathen Philosopher, that he advised his Scholars *not to suffer Sleep to seize on the Region of their Senses, before they had three times recalled to mind, the Conversation and Accidents of the Day past.*

Let us Christians then in a stricter Sense, examine what we have committed against the Divine Law, what we have omitted of our Duty, and in what

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what measure we have made use of the Divine Grace, to the purposes of Virtue and Religion, joyning Reason as a Judge to the Legislative Mind or Conscience ; that as a Law-Giver and Judge it may reign there ; by which means, Christ's Kingdom will be set up in our Hearts, and so we shall always Live in the Eyes of our Judge, by the measures of Reason, Religion, and sober Councils : And the Benefit we shall receive by this Christian Practice, will be a comfortable Death, enabling us smilingly to meet the King of Terrors, and patiently suffer him to open the Gate of Mortality, to give our Souls a joyful entrance into a Blessed Eternity. And to this Self-Examination, joyn Charity, and be fruitful in good Works, because they are Preparatory and Impetratory of the Grace of Repentance, and are Fruits of Repentance. Wherefore St. Chrysostome tells us, *That Repentance without Alms is Dead, and without Wings, so that it can never soar upwards to the Element of Love.* And St. Hierom tells us, *He never remembers to have Read, that any Charitable Person Dyed an Evil Death :* And long experience has let us see, that God's Mercy usually descends on Charitable Persons, as the Dew descended on Gideons Fleece when all around it was Dry. Thus (says Tobias) *it delivers from Death :* And the Wise Son of Sirach tells us, *that Alms make an Attonement for Sins :* When Faith fails, and Chastity is uselefs, and Temperance shall be no more, then Charity shall bear us on Wings of Cherubims to the Glorious Pallace of the King of Kings, even to the Eternal Mountain of the Lord. Cyrus the Persian Emperor, though a Heathen, had the reward of his Good Works in his Eye, when on his Death-Bed he said, *I have been a lover of Mankind, and a Friend, and Merciful, and now I expect to communicate in that great kindness that bestows, even that great God who is the Father of Men and Mercies :* But this only done on a Death-Bed, is of no more Value than a Death-Bed Repentance ; but we must do it in Health and Strength, when we can keep and enjoy what we give, if we please ; we

must do it freely and cheerfully, willingly, and without grudging : Let us not first kindle our Lights when we are to descend into the House of Darknes, for that is like bringing a glaring Torch suddenly into a Dark Room, which rather amazes the Eye than delights it : But if our Tapers have in their constant course descended into their Grave, crowned all the way with Light, then let the Death-Bed Charity be double, and the Light shine brightest when it is to illuminate your Hearse ; and it will, by the remembrance of what has been done in Compassion and Mercy, abate much of the weight of Death. For when a Dying Man perceives a Cloud of Darknes about to overspread him, and is compassed with Sorrow when he feels the weight of a Sickness, and does not feel the refreshing Beams of God's loving Kindnes ; and has many things to trouble him, looking round about, and seeing no Comforter ; then let him call to mind what Injuries he has forgiven, how apt he has been to pardon all Affronts and recalled Persecutions ; how he has Embraced Peace when it was offered him, and how he followed after Peace when it fled from him : Let him remember the Alms he has given, the Naked he has Cloathed, the Hungry he has Fed ; and these will be Solid Comforts to him, when all outward things will yield him no Consolation ; but rather make themselves Wings to fly away from him, when he might expect most from them : Therefore, as St. Clement Advises, *If you have any thing in your hands, give it, that it may work to the Remission of Sins, for by Faith and Alms, Sins are Purged.*

And now above all, have recourse to fervent Prayer ; for there is no greater Argument in the World of our Spiritual danger and unwillingness to Religion, than the backwardness too many have to this main Duty ; when all is no other than a desiring God to give us the greatest and best things we stand in need of, and which can only make us Happy : It is a Duty so Easie, so Honourable, and to so great a purpose, that in all the Instances of Religion

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Religion and Providence, except the Incarnation of
his Son, God hath not given us a greater Argument
of his Willingness to have us saved, of his Good-
ness and infinite Condescension, than by rewarding
us for a Duty with so great a Blessing : It is an
Act of Grace, and the highest Honour, that we who
are but Dust and Ashes, are admitted to speak to the
Eternal God, to run to him as to a Father ; to lay
open our Wants, and to complain of our Burthens ;
to explicate our Scruples, to beg Remedy and Ease,
Support and Council, Health and Salvation in the
Day of Death : And all Efficacious Prayer must be
made with Faith and Hope, that is, we must cer-
tainly believe we shall receive the Grace which God
hath Commanded us to ask ; and we must have Hope
for such things as he hath permitted us to desire of
him, and so our Hope shall not be in vain in the Lord ;
though we miss what is not absolutely promised, be-
cause we shall at least have an equal Blessing in the
Denial, as in the Grant ; and therefore, we must
always take care to ask such things as are Innocent,
Necessary, or Profitable to us, and not such things
as may be Hurtful or Unlawful ; and so we shall
find acceptance, if our Prayers be Devout and Sin-
cere, Fervent, Intense, and Importunate : And to
this, we are vehemently pressed in many Passages of
Holy Scripture, viz. Continue instantly in Prayer ;
labour fervently in Prayer Night and Day ; pray exceed-
ingly ; pray always with all Prayer : So St. Paul Phrases
it, Watching unto Prayer ; praying earnestly : And our
Saviour tells us, that Men ought always to pray and
not to faint, that is, frequently, at all convenient Seasons.
In all Forms of Prayer, mingle your Petitions with
Thanksgiving, that you may endear the present Prayer
and the future Blessing, by returning Praise and
Thanks for what is already received : And so St.
Paul Advises, viz. Be careful for nothing ; but in every
thing by Prayer and Supplication, let your requests be
made known unto God. And in all our Prayers, we
must be careful to attend that Duty with a firm pre-
sence of Mind, not suffering our thoughts to wander ;
or

or be distant from our words, much less be contrary to them; and if our thoughts do thus stray at any time, and divert upon other Objects, we must bring them back again with prudent and severe Arts; by all means striving to obtain a Diligent, a Sober, Untroubled, and a Composed Spirit: And in approaching God in this way, let it be done with all imaginable Awe and Reverence, with Gravity and Humility; and if at any time we feel our Spirits apt to wander in our Prayers, and to retire into the World, use Prayer to be Assisted in Prayer; pray for the Spirit of Supplication, and for a Sober, Fixed, and Recollected Spirit: And when to this you add a moral Industry, to be steady in your Thoughts, whatsoever wanderings after this do return irretrievably, are a misery of Nature, and an Imperfection, but no Sin whilst it is not Indulged or Cherished. As often as possible, frequent Publick Prayers, and omit no opportunity to Participate of the Blessed Comforts of the Holy Sacrament; be often in Meditations and deep Contemplations, short Ejaculations, and Supplications; of which these few following, may be proper on many Occasions, viz.

1. *Out of the Depths have I cryed unto thee, O Lord hear my cry, let thine Ears be attentive to the voice of my Supplication.*

2. *If thou Lord should'st mark Iniquities, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee that thou may'st be feared.*

3. *Hide thy face O Lord from my Sins, and blot out all mine Iniquities: Create in me a clean heart O God, and renew a right Spirit within me.*

4. *Hear my Prayer, O Lord, and consider my desire: let my Prayer be set forth in thy sight, as the Incense; and let the lifting up of my hands be an Evening Sacrifice; and enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, for in thy sight shall no Man living be justified: Teach me to do the things that pleaseth thee, for thou art my God: let thy loving spirit lead me forth into the Land of Righteousness.*

5. O remember not the Sins of my Youth, nor my Transgressions, but according to thy Mercies remember me for thy Goodness sake, O Lord.

6. God restoreth my Soul ; he leadeth me in the path of Righteousness for his Names sake : Yea, though I walk through the Valley of the shadow of Death ; I will fear no Evil, for thou art with me, thy Rod and thy Staff do comfort me : O Lord thou hast pleaded the cause of my Soul ; thou hast redeemed my Life from Death.

These, and such like Pious Expressions darted towards Heaven, with fervent Devotion, will raise the Soul upon the Wing, and bear it in ardent Desires and divine Breathings and Pantings after the Water of Life, to the Gates of those Glorious Mansions it so earnestly wishes to Enter.

CHAP. VI.

With what Virtues and Graces a Man ought to be Fortified, and Arm himself against the Fear of Death, to make his Life comfortable, and to Dye in a Holy State, so to be everlastingly Happy.

THE fear of Death, as I have shewed, is Terrible to those who are not prepared for Death ; and sometimes when it enters surprizingly like a Thief, with an affrighting Vizour, or in the Night, strangely amazes and startles good Men ; and therefore I shall propose Briefly, some Remedies and supports against the fear of Death. And,

First, He that would not be afraid of Death, must learn to Contemn the World, and the Vanities of it, and strengthen his Spirits with the proper Instruments of Christian Fortitude : He must not be over fond of Life, nor proud of any Circumstances that attends it, but fit and prepare himself to bear afflictions, and suffer with Patience the Troubles of this World shall put upon him.

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Secondly, He must be Fortified with Christian Prudence, which is a great Security against the fear of Death, to consider of the Evil it can bring upon us, and then by all Spiritual ways fortifie himself against the worst that may befall him in that Evil Day : Let him endeavour to be in love with the Felicities of Saints and Angels ; for being once firmly grounded in a Belief, that there is a condition of Living better than this ; that there are Creatures more Noble than himself ; a Country far exceeding this in Majesty and Splendour, for which he is designed ; it will raise his Desires to be Converse with them, and an Inhabitant of those Glorious Mansions Above, into which none but Death, as the Porter to open the Gates of Mortality, can let him ; and then those Desires will render him fearless of Death, so that it will not become a formidable thing to him, by whose means he is to enter into so great a Felicity, where he shall converse with Glorious Saints and Angels, in Brightness out-shining the Sun ; nay, even with The Great Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls, Christ Jesus ; and even with God himself : For Christ Dyed for us : that whether we Wake or Sleep, we might live together with him. Then we shall be free from Lust and Envy, Fear and Rage ; from Covetousness and Sorrow ; from Rashness and Cowardice ; then we shall see strange things, and know new Propositions, and all things to higher purposes, and in another manner : And when we have surmounted all these difficulties, we may truly say with St. Paul, *O Death where is thy Sting ! O Grave where is thy Victory ! The Sting of Death is Sin, and the strength of Sin is the Law ; but thanks be to God, who giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

But after all this, I will not say that it is a Sin to be afraid of Death ; no, Life is a sweet and pleasant thing to all Creatures ; and God has given Life to Man to improve it, even here, to his Glory and Honour, by all the ways of Piety and Holiness, that he may receive in the End, the

Crown laid up for those that are faithful unto Death; yet happy is he whose Conversation is fix'd so above, that resigning himself entirely to the Will of God in his good time, Death in all his Terrors cannot shake his Mind, or cast a Cloud of Fear to darken his Contentments, nor disturb his innocent Contemplations, retired Thoughts, or moderate Recreations.

C H A P. VII.

A further Reflection on our Mortality and a Dying State.

IF a Man or Woman lives never so long and happy in this World, yet ought they not to refrain entertaining their Thoughts with frequent Considerations and Remembrances of their Dying-Hour; for this is a Duty incumbent on all, seeing all are mortal, and there is nothing more certain than Death; and so to have a very great care, that the Joys of this Life do not so ingross and take up our Thoughts, as to make us forget the Days of Darkneſs which are coming on, to ſucceed the Sun-ſhine of this Life's Proſperity, which Days will be many more, and laſt exceedingly longer, than the longeſt Life of Happineſs we can promiſe our ſelves here, though our Days may be many upon Earth, and in thoſe Days of Darkneſs the things of this World ſhall nothing avail us; we ſhall ſee the Light of the Sun no more, but be laid up in the gloomy Recesses of the lonely Grave, to moulder into Duſt, and there the Body ſhall continue inſenſible of any thing all the ſpace between the Day of our Death and the Day of the Reſurrection, till by the Almighty Power of God it ſhall be cauſed out of this fatal Slumber into a State of Everlaſting Life and Activity: For though we dye we have a ſure Promiſe that the Grave ſhall not have always Power to detain our Bodies; our ſcattered Duſt ſhall be collected, and we ſhall ariſe at the general Reſurrection to be eternally Happy or Miſerable.

ble. The Consideration of which should make us lead such Lives, in all Godliness and Honestly, that when ever our appointed Time comes, we need not fear to Dye; and the best way to prepare us for a happy Change, is frequently to remember we are mortal Creatures, and how long soever we may live, yet at last we must resign our Breath. It was the Council of St. Chrysostom, *That we should always be knocking at the Gates of the Grave, and then the Grave could have no Power over us to our hurt*; that is, continually to meditate on Death and Eternity. And this frequent Remembrance of our Mortality is founded on such conspicuous Reasons, and is so obvious to the Conscience of every considering Man, that not only the Christians, but even the Heathen Philosophers, had a great regard to it, and taught their Followers so to do; nay more, even that our Lives ought to be a constant Meditation of Death; and so the Scripture commands us *to wait all the Days of our appointed Time, till our Change comes*. We should be meditating of Death in Health and Prosperity as well as in Sickness or Adversity, and ever look upon our selves as borderers on Eternity, still taking care to mingle our Delights with sad Remembrances of our Mortality, and not suffer the Pleasures of this Life to divert our Thoughts from that impending Fate which will ere long set an everlasting Period both to them and that; and in so doing it will greatly moderate our Affections to the World, and allay the Gayety and Vanity of our Minds, putting us upon improving our present Enjoyment of Things to the best purposes, fore-arming our Minds against the Terrors of Death, and is necessary to excite and quicken our Preparations for Eternity.

Now what can moderate our Affections to the World more powerfully, when we are surrounded with Delights and Pleasures that strive wholly to take up our Minds, and shut our Eyes against all Futurities, than to consider all those Delights and Pleasures are but flattering Dreams; that they are but Momentary; and that ere long we must go down to the

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the silence of the Grave, and leave all the Comforts
 this World can furnish us withal behind us; and
 then they can afford no Comfort or Consolation?
 Nay, even upon our Death-Beds, they seem to up-
 braid us and mock our foolish Hopes, and expose
 our baffled Expectations, to Scorn and Derision. And
 here we may fancy, we hear a Dying Man in the
 Groans and Anguish of his Soul, calling to them in
 this manner: O ye helpless and impotent things!
 What are now become of all your boasted Comforts?
 You promised me a World of Felicity, even a Heaven
 upon Earth: Why wretched things, do you now
 forsake me in my greatest Want and Extremity?
 Why do not you help me, who so much doated on you,
 that for your sake, *I put far away the Evil Day*, which
 has now surprizingly overtaken me? Why do not
 you quench my raging Thirst? Why do not you
 cool my Feverish Blood? Why do not you ease my
 labouring Heart, and my tormented Bowels? But
 above all, allay the Anguish of my Soul, and the
 Horrors of my Conscience, that now gripe and tear
 me for not remembering my Latter End sooner, and
 preparing for an Eternity of Happiness, your gilded
 Appearances and vain Flatteries have deluded me of;
 and what Answer may they be fancied to return,
 but to this purpose.

Alas, poor deluded Fool! we have now no power
 to relieve or succour thee; we are upon the Wing to
 fly from thee; or if we should stay, you must leave
 us, being Summoned away by a fatal Power, which
 we can neither Resist nor Bribe: Your Body must
 descend to the Chambers of the Grave, to lye in-
 sensible till the Resurrection, and moulder into Dust;
 whilst your Soul must pass into the Region of Spi-
 rits, where all Access is forbidden us: There you
 will have nothing of all the Wealth you so much
 trusted in, and doated on to subsist on, but only
 the Graces and Virtues of your Mind, if such remain
 with you; if not, you must be Miserable to all
 Eternity, without an Infinite Mercy meet you in
 the way.

And thus you see, setting our Hearts on the things of this World nothing avails us in the Hour of Death, but rather adds to our Misery when we are hurried away from them to pass into an Eternal State : To cool and allay then the Ardour of our Affections to the World, it is highly needful for us frequently to have our Latter End in Remembrance ; considering, that here we have no tarrying City, that we are Pilgrims on Earth, and know not how soon we may be called from hence.

And now, the best way to allay the Vanity and Gaiety of our Minds, (which are too apt to be Elated with the Pleasures and Delights of this World, whilst we are incompasped with them, which renders us too Frolick and Jovial to take any serious Impressions, especially of long continuance ;) is frequently to remember our departure hence, and that our Day is far spent, and the Night of Death is hastening to over-shadow all Light and Vain Tempers, Loose Company, or Gay Ideas of our selves, the Pride of our own Wit, Wealth, Beauty or Finery, with which too many are apt to flatter themselves as well, as with frothy Mirth and vain Discourses ; and therefore to fix such volatile Tempers, and to render them capable of Wise and Serious Thoughts, I would advise them seriously to Meditate on these things. As for Instance, when in the Night you are Priding your self in your Pomp and Splendour of an outward Condition, think thus with your self : Alas, the time will shortly come, when this Bed which now is as Soft and as Gay as the Sleep, and the Sins it entertains, must be the recumbency of my Languishing and Death : Here I must unavoidably Expire ; and all my Wealth, Wit, or Beauty, will not be able to relieve me, or hinder the fatal stroke of Death. In that sad Hour, all I can boast of, will be no more able to relieve me, than the Landskip on my Walls or on my Hangings ; then may I successfully address my self to my Pictures, and try to entertain my Mirth and Luxuries with them, or to please my Ear with listning to painted Sounds

or to satisfy my Hunger with the Image of a Feast, as to give my self any Ease or Satisfaction with these Gay things I am so Proud of ; and when at length I have sigh'd and groan'd away my fleeting Breath, then must I be removed from all my Attendance and Joyal Companions, into a gloomy and lonely Grave, a solitary and narrow space of Earth, where all my present Splendour must Expire, whilst I become a cold Victim to the Gasty King of Terrors, laid up to the Morning of the Resurrection.

Again, when the Morning Dawns, and you arise to entertain your Vanity with your Wit and Beauty, Fine Cloaths, and the like, then seriously consider with your self, that all this Gaiety and Splendour in a little time will avail you nothing : All the objects of your Pride will utterly forsake you ; your Beautiful Body will be wasted into Rottenness and Corruption, your shining Forehead must be overcast and clouded with a clammy Sweat ; your sparkling Eyes wax dim like a sullied Mirror ; your Tunefome Voice grow Weak and Faint as a distant Eccho ; and all those Roses and Lillies that appear so Charming in your Beautious Cheeks, be blasted by Death and wither into a Deadly Paleness, and all your comely Beauties be shrouded in the Horrors of a loathsome Grave.

Again, after your repast to allay and temper your Sports and Luxuries, that otherways will be apt to carry you too far ; seriously consider with your self, that those which are already in the Repository of the Dead shut up in silence, once Feasted and Sported as you have done, but now are become a Prey to Worms, and Cloathed with Corruption ; and if you should go down into a Charnel-House, and there for a while survey the numerous Trophies of Victorious Death ; in them you might see what will be your own Condition ; there you may find a naked Skull that once was covered with comely and curled Locks of Hair like yours, and see those Holes that once were filled with sparkling Eyes, whose Lustre could dazzle the Beholders with their darted Rays, and
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looked as charmingly as yours : Those hollow pits, were once covered with Cheeks as smooth and amiable as yours ; that Mouth which gives a Ghastly Grin, once smiled Gracefully, and spoke as Eloquenty, and with as much Fluency as yours ; and then it is your part seriously to reflect, that in a little time you know not how soon you must be in the same State ; your Bones perhaps mingled with these Bones, and representing all their Horrors with a Nose sunk, Jaws gaping, Mouth grining, and Worms crawling in those empty holes in which at present your Eyes roll to and fro in Amorous Glances ; and peradventure, a Toad engendering in that Brain that is now so full of sprightly Thoughts and gay Conceptions.

These, and the like Serious Considerations of our Mortality, will doubtless put us in Mind of Aiming higher and better things than the Vanity of this World can afford us, even to press forward to gain a Future World of Endless Happiness, and avoid that of Endless Torments ; for although these Worlds are the most serious things in the World to be considered of, yet being both Future and Invisible, Vain and Sensual Minds are not so capable of apprehending them, and therefore stand in need of strong and pressing Motives to enforce a Consideration of the State after this Life is ended, which must be either Happy or Miserable for ever ; therefore let us take a speedy care to entertain our selves with the thoughts of them by degrees, that so we may wear off the Levity and Vanity of our Minds, and compose our Minds into such a degree of Attention and Seriousness, as is needful to qualify us for those Religious and Divine Considerations that must set us forward in our way ; and without which, we are not capable of expecting to become Good Men in this World, or Happy Men in the World to come.

Again, to have Mortality very frequent in our Remembrance, even in the midst of our most prosperous Circumstances, is a necessary means to direct them

them to the best Improvement of the present Enjoyment, and turn them to the best Purposes ; therefore consider, here we have no long abiding, but are on Earth Pilgrims and Strangers, travelling to a Country where we are to expect the Fulness of the Enjoyment of that Happiness which here we have but a slender Earnest in the utmost Felicities this World can afford us ; and therefore to toil our selves to lay up Riches, add House to House, and Field to Field, as if we were to continue on this side the Grave for ever, is a stupendious over-sight : For what Merchant, travelling into a far Country to get Riches, would buy Farms and build Houses, when he knows he must leave the Place and them behind, to return in a short time by a strict Command ? No ; he will rather convert them to such precious Movables, if he be a Wise Man, as are easily portable, and that he can carry along with him when ever he makes his retreat. And indeed, if we consider seriously as we ought to do, it is a main Question, as some Men use their Riches, whether it would not be better for them to be destitute of them ? For either they convert them into a Miserableness by their being over-covetous, or lavish them into Riot and Luxury. The first of these we plainly find impoverishes, and the latter furnishes them with grievous Pains, and often with loathsome Diseases : For in this case who with a spark of Reason can consider a penurious covetous Man to be happy, in what he perhaps, with infinite Toil, has heaped up ; and too frequently this is done by Extortion and Oppression, by Devouring of Widows Houses, drinking, as I may term it, their fill of deplorable Orphans Tears, and grinding the Face of the Poor ; when all his Wealth amounts to no more than to increase his Need ; for before, he needed what he was destitute of, but now he needs what he hath, for want of a Heart to enjoy it, as well as what he hath not ; his own covetous Desires hindering him from tasting the Sweets of what he has stored up, by pushing him on to increase it, and render him still restless and uneasie in any

Station : Or if on the other hand he launches into Luxury and Riot, here he is intangled in Misery and Uneasiness ; by this* he consumes his Health, and wastes his Estate ; so that whereas it found him poor and well, it now leaves him poor and in a sickly Condition. And in general, the possession of Riches in those that know not how to use them aright, does but swell and bloat them up, rendering them proud and insolent, oppressive and griping, or pampers and enrages their Lust, stretching out their Desires into an insatiable vastness, and what is worse, fill their Minds full of Cares, and wound their Consciences with the poisonous Arrows of innumerable Guilts ; and by all these sad Effects inflames the Reckoning with God, *treasuring up Wrath against the Day of Wrath.*

Now all these dire Effects befall Men for neglecting, or not regarding, to meditate and seriously consider of their Latter End ; for did they but reflect on the little time that is before them to enjoy the Comforts of this Life in, and that how soon they know not they shall be strip'd of them all ; and as Naked they came into the World, so Naked they shall pass out of it through the Cold Embraces of Death ; and that once departed hence, they shall have nothing of all their Wealth to subsist on to Eternity, but only the Charitable Deeds they have done with them, the Oppressions they have eased, the Necessities they have relieved, the Hungry Bellies they have filled, the Naked Bodies they have Cloathed. These, and such like Considerations, would awaken them out of the Lethargy of Sin and soft Delights, and affright or lead them to a speedy Repentance ere Death steals upon them as a Thief in the Night, and lays them up to Eternal Ages.

C H A P. VIII.

A Sick and Dying Man's Circumstances nearly considered, with proper Directions what he ought to do during the time of his Sickness and at his Dying Hour.

AS the Fall of Man brought Sin into the World, so Sin entailed Death on all the Posterity of Adam; though this Death which we pay as a Debt to Nature happens sundry ways, sometimes Violently, sometimes by a sudden Surprise, and at other times by Pains and tedious Sickness. Man has but one way to come into the World, but many to go out of it; and the Devil is always most busie with his Temptations, when we are cast upon a Bed of Languishing, or when he can discern Death is nearly approaching us; though it is certain, God has not suffered him to know the precise time of our Death, yet however, upon the appearances and likelihood of it, he is always most busie: Then it is our part to Summon all our Force to resist him, and not trusting in our own strength too far: We must lay help on one that is Mighty, who is both able and willing to assist us in the time of our Tryal; and has promised never to leave or forsake us when we rely upon him, and put our whole Trust and Confidence in him, by a strong Faith and Dependence on his Mercy. He will hear our Sighs, our Groans, our Prayers, our humble Complaining and dolorous Expressions, and assist us with his Holy Spirit, to enable us to overcome those Temptations that would distract and disorder our serious Thoughts, if we set not our Minds fully to resist them.

To this end, we must fortifie our selves with patience, all we are able, and take care our complaining in Sickness, be without despair, for that is Derogatory to the Goodness of Almighty God, who is able to save to the utmost, all that come unto him. And if this Danger beset us in Sickness, we must

must implore Aid, as I said, from Above; and oppose Hope against so dangerous an Enemy to our Souls; pray to God for Help and Remedy; send for the Spiritual Guide to Pray with us and Instruct us; and use all Holy Exercises and Acts of Grace proper to the state of Sickness; let our Complainings be Soft and Gentle, without Murmuring, for Murmuring's a Sin against God's Providence and Government, by it we grow rude, and like the fallen Angels, displeased at God's Supremacy, having a better opinion of our sinful Selves, than of the Divine Justice which inflicts the Sickness on us.

Against this, oppose that part of Patience which resigns a Man into the hands of God, saying, with Old Eli, *It is the Lord, let him do what he will, and thy Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.* And so by Admiring and Adoring God's Justice and Wisdom, it disposes us to receive Mercy, and secures us the rather in the Grace of God: And the proper Acts of Repentance are, to Confess and Acknowledge our Sins, beg Mercy and Forgiveness, and Praise God from the lowest Abyſſe of humble Miſery; and so your Complainings must be without Frowardness or Peevishness; but bear all things with a Patient Resignation to the Will of God, and this will Sanctifie your Sickness to you, and render your Departure out of this Life comfortable, and without those Terrors that an Impatient, and distracted Sickness brings upon Men.

And now is the time, when a strong and steady Faith appears most necessary; for it is the Foundation of a good Life, and of all our Hopes, without which we can neither Live nor Dye well: It is a Grace that in time of Sickness we shall unavoidably stand in need of to support our Spirits, to sustain our Hopes, to alleviate our Sickness, and to prevent Despair; it is that which must bear our Souls up on God's Promises, and make us Patient under our Sufferings, even unto Death. And in this Case, to strengthen our Faith, is to have a firm Reliance on God's Mercies and Gracious Promises for the

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Pardon and Remission of our Sins, upon a true and hearty Repentance ; for with such a Faith, we are able to quench all the fiery darts of Satan, and Baffle his strongest Temptations and crafty Wiles, and to quicken and enliven our Faith, it will not be improper at this time, to use such short Ejaculations as these which will be greatly to our Comfort.

Viz.

I know and am perswaded by the Lord Jesus, that none of us liveth to himself, and that no Man dyeth unto himself ; for whether we live, we live unto the Lord ; or whether we dye, we dye unto the Lord ; whether we live therefore or dye we are the Lord's. Rom. 14. 14. 7, 8.

If any Man Sin, we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins. 1 John 2: 1. 2.

Lord, to whom shall I go from thee ? thou hast the words of Eternal Life. John 6. 68.

Cease ye from Man whose Breath is in his Nostrils ; for wherein is he to be accounted of ? Isa. 2. 22. But the just shall live by Faith. Rom. 1. 17.

Lord, make me stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for I know that my Labour is not in vain in the Lord. 1 Cor. 15. 58.

And use short Prayers to this purpose ; as likewise to Pray for Grace and the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, which will be of Admirable Consolation in time of Tryal, when all Christian Graces and Virtues are needful to support us under our Sufferings, and the Temptations that beset us ; and then let us inquire into the Repentance of our former Lives : Let us now supply the Imperfection of that Repentance, by a general and universal Sorrow for all our Sins known and unknown, repented and unrepented of, even Sins of Ignorance or Infirmary, as well as Clamorous and Whilpering Sins ; the Sins of Scandal, and the Sins of a secret Conscience of the Flesh and of the Spirit. For, The Sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. And being thus prepared, we may venture upon the Holy Sacrament, the Pledge of our

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Dear Redeemer's Love taken in Remembrance of him, with all the Benefits of his Death and Passion if worthily received ; and thus a Man, having by all the Acts of Religion made his Peace with God : When the Veil is rent, and his Soul departs to its Native Country, then great is the Joy even in Heaven ; no sooner are the Prison-Doors of Mortality unlocked by the grim King of Terrors in the presence of God's Holy Angel, but the Soul goes forth full of Hope, and sometimes with Evidence, and always with certainty in the thing ; and instantly it passes into the throngs of Spirits, where the Angels meet it with Anthems of Joy and Praises to God ; and the Devils flock with Evil purposes, endeavouring to lead it away into the Regions of Darkness and Sorrow ; but the Angels bear the Soul forward, because the Holy Jesus has Interceded on its behalf, and Answered for it. Then the Devils Rage and Gnash their Teeth ; they see the Soul Chaste and Pure, and they are ashamed they see it Penitent, and they despair : Then it passes by them in Triumph, and Rejoyces being securely carryed into the Bosom of our Lord, where it shall rest till its Crown is finished, and its Mansions are prepared ; and then it shall Feast and Sing, and Rejoyce, and Worship for ever and ever.

But it is far otherwise with a Wicked Man when he he Dyes, for when gasping for Life, he shall look for some to have Pity on him, but there is no Man : No Man dares be a Pledge for him, no Man can Redeem his Soul then going forth of his Senseless Body ; it wants a good Angel for it's Guide, the Holy Spirit for its Comfort, and Christ for its Advocate ; and is by the Wicked Spirits (that seduced it to Sin against Infinite Goodness and Mercy, and to grieve the Holy Spirit that once interceded for it with Groans unutterable) hurried away to undiscernable Regions of Woe and Sorrow there to Weep and Tremble, and infinitely to fear Christ's coming to Judgment ; at which time it shall be brought forth to change that Condition for one more Intolerable,

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lerable, where it shall for ever feel more than we can understand.

A Prayer to be said by a Sick Person.

O Most Merciful, Gracious and Eternal Lord God, look down from Heaven the Habitation of thy Holiness, the Place where thine Honour dwells; and cast thy favourable Eye of Pity and Compassion upon me thy unworthy Servant: O favourably in Mercy hear my Cry, and let my Supplication be known unto thee; hear my groanings who art ever Gracious to those that put their trust in the Lord. I acknowledge my Sins, and my Transgressions are ever before me; and thou in thy Mercy hast promised, if we confess and forsake them, thou wilt pardon our Sins and blot out our Iniquities, and cleanse us from all Unrighteousness, for the sake of the Blessed Jesus who shed his precious Blood to satisfy thy Justice, and restore us to thy Mercy and Compassion. Lord, I put my whole Trust and Confidence in thee; and thou art ever Gracious to those that rely upon thee for Mercy, and art more ready to hear than we to pray; but all that I can do, and all that I poor sinful Creature am able to say, can add nothing to thee; but thou O Lord art of Infinite Compassion towards thy poor Creatures; thou hast made, and wilt for thy own Mercies sake, have pity upon my Infirmities and Misery; therefore I throw myself wholly into the Arms of thy Fatherly Compassion, imploring thee for the sake of thy dear Son, even by his Death and Passion, by his Glorious Resurrection and Ascension, and by all the parts of our Redemption, and in thy Infinite Mercy, in which thou pleasest thyself above all the Works of thy Creation, to have Pity and Compassion upon me thy Servant grievously afflicted with Sickness: Ease my Pains, and forgive me all Transgressions; pitifully look down upon my Sufferings and Afflictions; and whether it be for Life or for Death, let me Live or Dye in thy Fear and Favour, for the sake of my ever Blessed Redeemer Jesus Christ. Amen.

A Prayer with, or for a Sick Person, by Relations or others.

O Lord, most Gracious and Merciful, who art the God of all Comforts and Consolation, give this thy Afflicted Servant, Patience in his Sorrow, assist him in his grievous Sickness, and restore him to Health if it be thy Blessed Will, that he may yet live to Praise thee, and Magnifie thy Holy Name in the multitude of thy Mercies; but however thou shalt determine in thy Infinite Wisdom for Life or Death, above all, give him Grace and a sincere Repentance and an Amendment of Life, that his Sins may be blotted out, and his Soul be everlastingly Happy after it departs from this Mortal Body. Give him a steadfast Faith, and a confident Hope and Reliance on thy Mercies; Lord thou know'st all the Necessities and all the Infirmitizes of thy Servant: O fortifie his Spirit with Spiritual Joys and a perfect Resignation to thy Holy Will; and remove far from him all degrees of Inordinate or Insecure Affection to this World, and enlarge his Heart with desires of being with thee. O Lord, suffer not his Pains or Passions to discompose the order and decency of his Thoughts and Duty; and lay not upon thy Servant more than thou wilt enable him to bear; and together with the Temptation, do thou provide a way to escape, even by thy Mercies, of a longer and more Holy Life, or by the means of a Blessed Death, as it best pleases thee: And this we beg through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ our only Lord and Saviour. Amen.

A Family-Prayer, where it is often Afflicted with Sickness or other Calamities.

OUT of the Depth of Misery O Lord we cry unto thee, Lord hear our Voice, and let thy Ears be attentive to the Voice of our Supplication; for if thou O Lord should'st be extream to mark what we have done amiss, who can be able to stand before thee? Therefore we humbly beseech thee in thy great Mercy, not to enter
into

unto Judgment with us according to our Deserts, for in
thy sight can no Man be justified; therefore appealing
from thy Justice, we lay our Selves both Soul and Body
prostrate at the footstool of thy Throne of Mercy, imploring
thee O thou preserver of Men and lover of Souls, to look
down on this Afflicted Family, with thy Gracious Eyes of
Compassion; remove thy heavy hand from us, though justly
for our Sins we have deserved thy Wrath and Indignation
to fall upon us; but O there is Mercy with thee, where-
fore thou should'st be Feared and Adored; save us, O
Lord save us for thy Mercies sake, and shield us from
the shafts that fly by Day, and the terrors that go abroad
by Night: Fortifie us against the fears of Death, and let
not the affrightments of the Grave terrifie us, but heal in
thy Mercy, the Bones that thou hast broken, that so we
may hear of Joy and Rejoycing: Raise up those thou hast
cast down, and cover us under the Wings of thy Mercy;
spare us a little, that we may live to Praise thee, and
tell of all the mighty Wonders thou hast done for our
Souls, before we go hence and are no more seen. Lord,
if thou wilt, thou canst Heal us; O thou that wilt not
break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoking Flax,
take away thy Afflicting hand, and let us remain living
Monuments of thy Mercy: For who O Lord can Praise
thee in the Grave, or Sing of thy Loving Kindness in the
Dust! O spare us, spare us good Lord, even for thy great
Mercies sake, and for the sake of our Blessed Redeemer
Jesus Christ. Amen.

Serious Considerations of, and Meditations on
the Four Last Things, Viz. DEATH,
JUDGMENT, HEAVEN, and
HELL.

THERE is certainly nothing can more induce
Men and Women to lead a Holy and Pious
Life, no more effectual way to revive the true Spirit
of Christianity in the World, than a serious Medi-
tation on the Four last Things, viz. Death, Judgment,
Heaven,

Heaven and Hell : Therefore to awaken and rouse up drowſie Souls out of the Lethargy of Careleſneſs and Sin, I ſhall here give ſome convincing Notions of them, and Firſt of Death.

OF DEATH.

DEATH is held by all to be the bitter Enemy to Life, as altogether oppoſite to it ; ſo terrible a thing, that the very naming of it is apt to chill our Blood and Spirits, and to draw a ſable Veil over all the Pleaſures this World can afford us ; and yet this is the Condition of all Mankind ; for as ſure as we are Born, we muſt Dye, becauſe by the Supream Governour of all things, *It is appointed for Men once to Dye, and after that, to come to Judgment ; for that by Man Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin, and ſo Death paſſed upon all Men, for that all have Sinned. Rom. 5. 12.* And yet as for this Death Temporally conſidered, it is no other than our leaving this World, putting off our Earthly Bodies, and entering into a new and unknown ſtate of Life ; for our Souls do not fall into nothing, or reſt in a profound Silence or Sleep inſenſibly till the Reſurrection ; no, they only change their Place and Dwelling, removing out of the World, and leaving our Bodies to Sleep in the Earth till the Reſurrection, whiſt they Live in an Inviſible State ; and indeed this Life rightly conſidered, is no other than a ſtate of probation, of Growth and Improvement, to fit us for the Life that is to ſucceed Death : Yet at the Approach of this Ghaſtly King of Terrors, very often, the Good as well as the Bad are ſtartled and affrighted : This World, in the Enjoyment of it's Pleaſures, has an Influence on both, which makes them loath to leave it, and ingulf themſelves into a vaſt Eternity to leave Children, Friends, and Relations, to paſs into an Inviſible World ; to be there they know not well, where, or what, yet all muſt obey

by the fatal Summons: The Mighty cannot resist, the Rich Bribe, nor the Wise appeale or avoid the Stroke of Death; for as many Ages as have been since the World began, so many perfect Conquests has Death made: All Kings and Mighty Men must bow to his Stroke, and Submit to his Inexorable Power; for though all natural things do decline and grow weak, yet Death continues in one Strength and State, and is the last thing that shall be destroyed. The Wise Man tells us, *That God never made Death, but that it had its entry into the World, by the Malice and Subtilty of the Devil.* Wild. i. 13. St. Paul calls Death, *The last Enemy that shall be destroyed*, but that not before the end of the World, when there is nothing Mortal left for him to prey upon; in the mean while, his impartial Hand will reach the Bodies of Young and Old, to the gloomy Chambers of the Grave, and lay them up to the General Resurrection; for when he has battered down the Outworks of Life, by Sicknels or Pain, then he rushes in, and storms the Fortress of the Heart: Then it is, the Sick Man beginneth first to doubt of his Life, and by and by to despair; and at the last Contentions of the Soul, and the Reluctancy of the Body to part with it, the Forehead is bedewed with a Cold and Clammy Sweat, the Nose grows stop, and all Perfumes are ungrateful to it; the eyes sink and wax dim as a sullied Mirror, the Cheeks Pale and Wan, the Feet and Hands cold and stiff, and at last with a Groan or a Sigh, he expires among his Weeping Friends who stood about him; but as Miserable Comforters, being altogether unable to yield him any further relief: The Consideration of his Latter End, and the Fear of Dying, made Holy David cry out, *viz. The sorrows of Death compassed me, and the floods of Wickedness made me drown; the sorrows of the Grave have compassed me about, the snares of Death overtook me.* Psal. 18. 4, 5. And thus should every Man and Woman seriously reflect on the Danger they are always in, though in a State of Health, for they know not how soon they

they may be Summoned to the Grave ; the Tolling of the Passing-Bells, and the frequent meeting of Funerals, should make them frequently Meditate on their Latter End, and Wean their Affections from the things of this World, and prepare for their Departure hence, seeing, in the midst of Life we are in Death ; and as Death leaves us, so Judgment will certainly find us ; for what we do to be Happy hereafter, must be done in this short and uncertain time we have to Live on Earth, seeing there is no Repentance in the Grave.

On the Day of JUDGMENT.

THE coming of the Great and Terrible Day of Judgment (wherein both Small and Great must give an Account of their Actions done in this Life) is certain ; but the Time when it will be, is shut up in God's Secret Council and Eternal Purposes, so that the very Angels know not the Day nor Hour when Christ shall come to Judge the World. Attended with Myriads of Saints and Angels though the particular Judgment is with every Man when he Dyes ; for as he is found then, so shall his Case stand at the General Judgment, which will be a Day of Fury and Fear, an universal Flood of Fire shall Over-stream the whole World, and Consume both the Beauty and Glory thereof into nothing, when at the Sound of the Arch-Angel's Trumpet, all Graves shall open and yield up their Dead, even those that have been fettered in the Chambers of the Grave from all Ages since the World was made, shall then arise, and every Body receive its Soul again that was so long departed from it. Then shall the Book of every Man's naked Conscience be layed open, and all the Sins they have committed be Summed up, and charged against them, which they shall not be able to Deny or Extenuate in that Day, before the Dreadful Tribunal of the Righteous Judge, even all our Actions, Words and Thoughts.

may, those we most Esteemed or had Concealed, or Forgotten, shall be set in so open and clear a Light before our Eyes, that we shall stand ashamed and confounded with Horror and Amazement, having nothing to say against them, or plead in Excuse of them: Then shall the Sinner be charged with a strict Reckoning, how every Moment of his Life in this World has been employed; what Account he can give of the improvement of the Talent intrusted in his hands, whilst the Devils that Tempted him to misemploy his precious time in Sin and Vanity, shall ungratefully Accuse him of his neglect of improving it to the Glory of God, and the good of his own Soul: Foully Upbraiding him, and Aggravating the many Enormous Crimes he has committed; nay, his own Conscience, which would have been his greatest Friend and Comforter, had he Lived a Pious and Virtuous Life; will not only Accuse him, but give Evidence against him. And if the Dread of this Terrible Day, when St. Paul Preached but of Judgment to come, made *Felix*, the Governour of *Judea* Tremble; and the thoughts of it, made Holy *David* Confess, *he always trembled before the Majesty of God; like one that Saileth in a stormy Tempest*; and that his Fear has been so great, that he has been unable to bear it; how much more when this Day comes at unawares, shall all the Nations and Kindreds of the Earth Mourn and Tremble, and be exceedingly afraid; for if the Righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the Wicked and Ungodly appear? Their Case will be desperate and deplorable before a Judge, who is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity, without Revenging the Affront done to his Divine Majesty. Then shall the Kings, and Captains, and the Great Men, not only tremble at the face of him that Sits on the Throne to Judge them, but call to the Rocks, Hills, and Mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the Face of the Lamb, and him that sitteth on the Throne; whose Majesty they have Dishonoured, whose Mercy, and whose Might they have Despised; whose Glory they have Abased, whose Goodness they have

have Abused, whose Presence they have Profaned, whose Long Patience and Forbearance, they have Interpreted as a Neglect and Forgetfulness of the Affairs of the World, or an allowance of their Evil Deeds ; but all Shifts and Excuses will then be vain. A Righteous Judgment shall pass upon them, of *Depart from me ye Cursed into Everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels* : Ah woful Sentence indeed ! *For who can dwell in the Burning Fire ? Who can abide in the everlasting Flames ?* Then will the Devils who Accused them, hurry them away to Everlasting Regions of Woe and Sorrow, where the gnawing Worm of Conscience never Dyes, nor ceases to Torment them, nor the Fire ever goeth out ; nor shall the loss of Heavenly Joys, for Trifles, be the least of their Pains, but the greatest of their Torments, when they see the Righteous enter into Heaven, and themselves shut out ; when they hear the Sentence on the other Hand, of *come ye Blessed of my Father, Inherit the Kingdom, prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.*

These Melancholy Circumstances well Weighed and Considered, should make us exceeding sensible of the Danger into which our Sins have hurried us ; and that all the Course of our Life is a continual Passage, and every moment of our time, a step towards this Judgment ; and yet so far are too many from regarding it, or having Compassion on themselves, that even going to this great Tryal, they cease not to Aggravate and Multiply their Transgressions as if they had made a Covenant with Death, and were at Agreement with Hell : Therefore let me earnestly Advise all, by a timely and earnest Repentance, to fly from this dreadful Wrath to come. *Take heed to your selves, that your Hearts be not made heavy with Eating and Drinking, and the Cares of this Life, and that Day come suddenly upon you as unawares.* Luke 21. 34.

ON HEAVEN, and its unspeakable Joys and Comforts.

I Have often shewed you in the Considerations of our Mortality, that this World is not to be any lasting or long abiding place for us : Let us seriously Meditate then, on that which is to be our Lasting and Eternal Habitation, even the Highest Heavens ; and its Glories and Transcendent Excellencies, will raise our Souls on the Wings of Holy Desires, and enflame our Hearts with earnest Desires of enjoying it. Be earnest with *St. Paul*, to depart and be with Christ, which is infinitely far better, than all the Transitory things of this World, to see him who suffered so much for us, Crowned with Majesty and Honour, surrounded with the whole Choir of Angels and Saints, like the Sun in the midst of a Circle of Stars, Adored and Worshipped, Praised and Admired by all the Court of Heaven, and Celebrated with Songs of Cherubims and Seraphims, of Angels and Arch-Angels, and the Spirits of Just Men made perfect ; saying, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Power and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing, who has Redeemed us unto God by thy Blood, out of every kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation. Rev. 5. 12.* And when we come to the City of the Living God, the Holy and Heavenly Jerusalem, the great Apostle tells us, what Company we shall find there, *An innumerable Company of Angels, the general Assembly and Church of the first Born : God the Judge of all ; The Spirits of Just Men made perfect ; And Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant. Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24.* It is a place of Glory and Felicity, where nothing is intermingled with what is Heavenly and Divine. Heaven is a place of Infinite Glory, framed and adorned for the Majesty, and agreeable to the State of Almighty God ; and is no less Magnificent and Glorious than his Wisdom could contrive, and his Power perform, and that is above all Compass and Comparison Infinite : The Contemplation of which

Super-abundant Excellency, made Holy David cry out as in a Rapture, *O how amiable are thy Dwellings, thou Lord of Hosts, my Soul longeth and panteth to enter into thy Courts, even thy great City, Holy, and Heavenly Jerusalem; which as St. John in his Revelation tells us, Shinneth with Glory as clear as Crystall, whose Buildings are of pure Gold, whose Walls and Foundations are of precious Stones, and whose Gates are so many entire Pearls, whose Streets are paved with Gold, and where there is no need of any Sun, for the Lamb is the Lamp, which giveth in a Large and Glorious Light; from whose Seat streameth a River of Water of Life; on the Banks of which, grows the Tree of Everlasting Life, which continually yieldeth both Physick and Food. There is no Curse, no Sickness or Sorrow, but there all Sorrow shall be done away, and all Tears wiped from our Eyes; and therefore, how infinitely Blessed will they be who shall Inhabit this Glorious Place, not only for a time, but to all Eternity, without Alteration or Change: Therefore let us strive, by all the ways of Virtue and Religion, by mortifying our Lusts and Corruptions, to enter in at the strait Gate, or by incessant Prayers and strong Crys, to storm Heaven, and take it by Violence; and then with Joy, approaching the Glorious Throne, we may Sing the Song of Angels with Joy and exceeding Consolation, viz.*

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come; Heaven and Earth, Angels and Men, the Air and the Sea, give Glory and Honour, and Thanks to him that sitteth on the Throne, who liveth for ever and ever. All the Blessed Spirits and Souls of the Righteous, cast their Crowns before him, and Worship him, who has Redeemed us unto God by his Blood out of every Nation, and has made us unto God, Kings and Priests, and we shall Reigu with him for ever and ever. And thus Contemplating on these things, it cannot but raise our Souls on the Wings of Ardent Desire, to lift themselves up to the Glories of this Eternal Kingdom, which God has prepared for all those that Love and Fear him.

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On HELL and its Torments.

HELL, is held by all to be a place of Hor-
rors, Woes, and endless Misery, where Di-
vine Justice exerts its Power to the full; where all
Mercy is excluded, and no Pity or Compassion to the
Damned can ever enter; where there is nothing but
Horror, Tumultuous, and Eternal Horror, Flaming
Whips, Scorching Darknes, Tormenting Devils, and
burning Souls, Howling and Lamenting Woe and
Alas; with a Mad Rage Blaspheming God in de-
spair, for ever to be received into his Favour, and in
despite, for being Fettered by him in those Eternal
Dungeons, in those Everlasting Burnings, with a
desperate Impatience, Cursing all Creatures, and
especially themselves; tearing in a manner their
own Substance, and inviting the furious Fiends to
torment them.

All the Pains of this Life are singular, vexing
some one Sense or Member of the Body; or if many
be Afflicted at once, yet never all. But here, every
power and part of the Condemned Prisoner, as well
inward as outward, hath both a full and fit charge
of Punishment, without any Intermiſſion or Change;
as the Sinner has offended God with every power
of his Soul, and part of his Body, so must every one
of them receive their peculiar punishment: The Me-
mory will be tormented with the remembrance of
sinful Pleasures that are past; the Apprehension,
with Pains that are present; the Understanding, with
sorrow that are lost, and Miseries that are to come:
The Will, with a Malicious and Envious disposition
against the Glory of God, and of his Saints; and above
all, in this dreadful Place, the Conscience will be
tormented with bitter Despair, and a raging fruitless Re-
pentance for every particular Offence that the Sinner
has committed, which once seemed Soft and Sweet;
here, like Cruel Serpents, they shall restlessly
baw and Torment him, never ceasing to put into
Remembrance, how Base and Foolish the Causes
of all his Misery were, what warnings were given,
what means were presented him to have avoided

and how effectually he had been perswaded, how earnestly intreated to turn from the Evil and Vanity of his ways, and to accept the offers of Eternal Happiness, and not have come to this Dreadful place of Torment : He had not only *Moses* and the Prophets to Instruct him, but even a greater than they, the Lord from Heaven ; who came in low Humility, and shed (after a World of Sufferings) his Rich Redeeming Blood to save him : How easily he might, and how many times he nearly had apprehended the occasion ; and yet how Negligently, how Foolishly, how Madly he continued in his careless course, and let slip the Golden Opportunity of entering into a State of Bliss.

Then shall he Howl and Lament in vain, whilst the sight of Frightful and Ugly Fiends shall astonish him, whilst he is surrounded with fearful Darknels, hearing horrible and hideous Cryes, Weeping and Wailing, and Gnashing of Teeth ; smelling intolerable and Poisonous Stenches ; tasting Bitterness far exceeding Gall, and feeling the intolerable Pains of a raging Fire kindled by the wrath of God, and blown up by the Breath of his Indignation, into a Ten Fold Fury to Torment the Damned ; not for a time, but to all Eternity, leaving them both Hopeless and Comfortless. A Fire, which as nothing doth Feed it, so it Consumeth nothing it Burns : It gives no Light to Comfort, but Heat to Torment ; no Light, but to shew the Damned their Miseries, and the Miseries of those they inordinately affected, whilst the never Dying Worm of a tormented Conscience, adds Stings to its Rage and Fury.

And thus we see for Momentary Pleasures here, which are but Vanity, and carry in themselves no real Advantage or Contentment ; what a World of Felicity is lost, for a World of unspeakable and endless Misery ; the Joys of Heaven, are Exchanged for the Torments of Hell. O then let us be wise in time, and by an earnest and unfeigned Repentance, *flee from the wrath to come*, seeing God is not desirous of our Destruction, but rather that we should be Happy with him for ever.